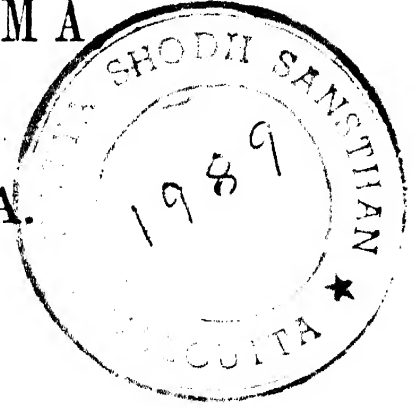


VENÍ-SANHÁRA NÁTAKA,
OR
THE BINDING OF THE BRAID,
A SANSKRIT DRAMA

BY
BHATTA-NÁRÁYANA.

DONE INTO ENGLISH



BY
SOURINDRO MOHUN TAGORE, Mts. Doc.,

Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire,

Knight Commander of the Royal Order of Leopold of Belgium; Knight Commander of the First Class of the Order of Albert of Saxony; Chevalier of the Imperial Order of Medjidie of Turkey, and of the Royal Portugese Military Order of Christ; Knight of the Siamese Order of Basabamala, and of the Order of Sarasvati, Sangita-Nayaka, and Sangita-Silpa-Vidyasagara of Nepal; Fellow of the University of Calcutta; President, Bengal Music School; Member of the Royal Asiatic Society, London and of the Ceylon Branch; Officier de l'Instruction Publique, Paris; Dottore di Musica e di Lettere, Napoli; &c., &c., &c.

Calcutta:

PRINTED BY I. C. BOSE & CO., STANHOPE PRESS, 249, BOW-BAZAR STREET,
AND PUBLISHED BY THE TRANSLATOR.

1880.

[All rights reserved.]

B
N.S.S.

Acc. No. 1988/3057

Date 31.12.1988

Item No. B/F-1989

Don. by

To

His Excellency the Right Hon'ble

EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON, BULWER-LYTTON,

BARON LYTTON OF KNEBWORTH, G. M. S. I.,

&c., &c., &c., &c.,

VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

My Lord,

THE invariable kindness which I have always received at YOUR LORDSHIP'S hands has emboldened me to approach YOUR LORDSHIP with an English Translation of the "Venī-Saṅhāra Nāṭaka," a Sanskrit drama by BHATTA-NĀRĀYANA, one of my ancestors, and to humbly dedicate it to YOUR LORDSHIP with YOUR LORDSHIP'S kind permission.

With the highest respect and gratitude,

I have the honor to subscribe myself,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most obedient and humble servant,

SOURINDRO MOHUN TAGORE.

CALCUTTA,

PATHURIAGHATTA,

1st January 1880.

}

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



Males.

YUDHISTHĪRA	...	<i>The first of the Pándavas.</i>
BHÍMA	...	<i>One of the brothers of Yudhisthira.</i>
ARJUNA	...	<i>One of the brothers of Yudhisthira.</i>
SAHADEVA	}	<i>Brothers of Yudhisthira.</i>
NAKULA		
KRISHNA	...	<i>The friend and ally of the Pándavas.</i>
DHRITARÁSHTRA	...	<i>The father of the Kaurava Princes.</i>
DURYODHANA	...	<i>The first of the Kurus.</i>
KARNA	...	<i>The friend and ally of Duryodhana.</i>
KRIPÁCHÁRYYA	...	<i>An ally of Duryodhana.</i>
ASAWTHÁMA	...	<i>A warrior Brahmin.</i>
SĀNJAYA	...	<i>The Charioteer of Dhritaráshttra.</i>
SUNDARAKA	...	<i>An attendant of Karṇa.</i>
CHARVAKA	...	<i>A Rákshasa.</i>
A RÁKSHASA	...	<i>The Charioteer of Duryodhana.</i>

SOLDIERS, ETC.

Females.

DRAUPADÍ	...	<i>The wife of the Pándavas.</i>
BHĀNUMATI	...	<i>The wife of Duryodhana.</i>
GĀNDHĀRĪ	...	<i>The mother of Duryodhana.</i>

The Maid of DRAUPADÍ. *The Maid of* BHĀNUMATI.

The Mother of JAYADRATHA. A Rákshasa.

ATTENDANTS.



BHĀTTA NĀRĀYAṆA, the author of *Veṇī-Saṅhāra*, was one of the five erudite Brahmins sent to Bengal, at the request of its ruler Adisura, by Vīra-Sinha, Prince of Kanouj, to perform an important sacrificial ceremony, which the ruler of Bengal was unwilling to leave in the hands of the comparatively ignorant Brahmins of his own country. These five learned Brahmins were rewarded with the grant of five villages in the province of Rār, and, it seems, preferred remaining in the land where they were so much honored and respected, to going back to their native country. The Brahmins of Bengal are their descendants, with the exception of a certain number, who are held to be of lesser rank.

The drama *Veṇī-Saṅhāra* was an offering from its author to the sovereign of his adopted country, and again was the reverend Brahmin rewarded with the gift of landed property.

The translator of this work claims descent from Bhatta Nārāyaṇa, and he is, with reason, proud of his ancestry. He is desirous of placing before the English public a work connected with the name and fame of this holy sage and accomplished scholar. He earnestly trusts, however, that the intrinsic merits of the original might not be lost sight of through the numerous blemishes and short-comings in the translation.

VENÍ-SANĀHĀRA.

ACT I.

A Camp in the field of Kurukshetra.

DRAUPADÍ seated with her MAID.

Maid. Why is Your Majesty so absent to-day? Sure, **you** don't brood on any omission on our part?

Drau. No! girl;—nothing of the kind.

Maid. Then may it please Your Majesty to speak out your mind. I am anxious.

Drau. (*Sighing*) What shall I say, girl? I am the most wretched woman living; no helpless female has suffered more than me—me who am the wife of the Pándavas. I am the daughter of the lord of Páñchála, I am the wife of the Pándavas, I am the mother of Abhimannu, yet my sorrow has not been a whit lightened for all that. Krishna, the friend of the Pándavas, cherishes me with love; but what does it avail? (*Sighing*) It sends a pang to my heart to remember the past. The villain Duhs'ásana* disgraced me in the midst of the assembly, by the orders of Duryodhana; but my wrong still remains unavenged. My knotted braid of hair got loosed by

* Yudhisthira after having lost everything at dice with his cousin Duryodhana, at last staked himself, his four brothers and their common wife Draupadí; but lost the game. Draupadí was then dragged into the court by order of the king.

the villain's grasp, and I mentally resolved never to tie it again so long as Duryodhana was not killed. But, alas! alas! my hairs yet remain unbound. Woe's me!

Maid. Have patience, Your Majesty. The Prince, Bhímsena, will fulfil your desire.

Draw. I had hopes, girl; but His Majesty has prevented it.

Maid. How so?

Draw. You don't know it? Krishna has gone to sue for peace with Duryodhana; but he ~~is~~ not to blame; it is His Majesty who has sent him.

Maid. Yes, I have heard it; but the Prince won't listen to all that. (*Hearing sounds of steps*) Look, he is coming this way. His face betokens displeasure; he might get angry at the proposal of peace.

Draw. I live on that hope; if *he* also incline to peace, I will surely put an end to this wretched existence of mine. (*Hangs down her head and weeps.*)

Enter BHÍMA and SAHADEVA.

Bhi. No, brother, you should not speak thus. All of you are ready to conclude peace, and you should not wish the enemy ill.

Saha. Brother, what shall I say? The sons of Dhritarástra are injuring us always; and hang me if your brother had borne all this, but for His Majesty.

Bhi. Who listens to His Majesty? Let him who will, not I. From this day, I am responsible for my

own actions. The wicked Duryodhana has singled me out for his enemy from his boyhood upwards—not His Majesty, not Krishna, not you all. You may very well think of peace; but I will none of it; I will fulfil my promise.

Saha. Sir, if you refuse to conclude peace, the governor will be sorry.

Bhi. (*Laughing*) Ha! ha! ha! ha! Does the governor ever feel sorry? He saw with his own eyes the disgrace of Draupadī in the midst of the assembly, he saw us pining in bondage in bark cloth for twelve weary years and drudging like slaves in Virāta in disguise. Did he feel sorry for all this, that he will feel sorry for my refusal? Let him; go, tell it him.

Saha. What shall I say?

Bhi. Tell him,—‘Bhīma won’t listen to any such thing.’ Let people blame me and let his brothers feel sorry, if they like; from this day, I owe no allegiance to His Majesty, nor can he claim any from me; I will destroy the Kuru race with this mace of mine.

Saha. Pray, Sir, sit you down on this cushion.

Bhi. (*Sitting down*) Well, Sahadeva, what kind of treaty has Krishna gone to conclude with Duryodhana?

Saha. His Majesty wants five villages only.

Bhi. (*Indignantly*) What! Has His Majesty become so feeble? I don’t know what to think of it. His Majesty has lost his *Aśhetriya* prowess at the

play, with the stakes ! What do you say, brother ! I will not think that you have told me of any such thing, or that I have heard of any such thing ! Tush !

Saha. (*Aside*) What is this ? Why is Draupadī so melancholy ? This is not well. Her tears will kindle my brother's wrath as the rainy season kindles the lightning.

Bhi. Alas ! His Majesty has lost even his *Kshetriya* might.

Maid. (*To Draupadī*) Look, the Prince is wrathful at the proposal of peace.

Drau. (*To Maid*) If it be so, I will not think of his slight.

Bhi. What ! Conclude peace with the Kauravas for five villages ! What does His Majesty think ? Shall I fold my hands,—shall I not exterminate the Kuru race—shall I not drink the life-blood of Duhsāsana—shall I not break the thigh of Duryodhana ? Your king goes to conclude peace for a money consideration !

Drau. (*Aside*) What do I hear ! Sweet words !

Saha. But you will not hear the terms His Majesty has proposed through Krishna ; you are so carried away by wrath.

Bhi. What shall I hear ?

Saha. What His Majesty has proposed.

Bhi. Proposed to whom ?

Saha. To Duryodhana.

Bhi. What has he proposed ?

Saha. He says, "If you agree to cede Indra-prastha and four other villages I can conclude peace."

Bhi. (*Frowning*) And what do we gain thereby?

Saha. By this proposal people will know that we don't thirst for the blood of our kin, at the same time that peace is concluded.

Bhi. Bosh! Are the Kauravas worthy to conclude peace with? That no peace could be concluded with them, I determined when we went into the wilderness. And further,—is the destruction of the race of Dhritarashtra so heinous that you will not be able to show your face to the world, if you do so? Fool! You take the destruction of your enemies a thing to be ashamed of—not the suffering a wife to be dragged by the hair into a full assembly, and stripped nude. Never mind, I only want to see Draupadī before I go to battle.

Saha. She is before you, Sir; you can't see her because of your anger.

Bhi. (*Seeing her*) Dear, my mind has been so much vexed at hearing of the peace proposal, that I could not perceive your presence here. Excuse me.

Drau. I am only sorry when you forgive your enemies.

Bhi. Then I have wittingly removed your uneasiness. (*Sits beside and looks at her*) Why love, why do you seem absent?

Drau. Not so much.

Bhi. You won't say it ; and what shall you say ?
(*Touching her hair*) That this has come to pass during the life of the Pándavas, speaks for itself.

Drau. (To *Maid*) Pray, tell of that matter to him, girl ; who else will feel for me ?

Maid. Yes, I will. Prince, Her Majesty has been insulted to-day.

Bhi. Insulted again ! Let me hear who has dared to do so, who has flung himself into this fire which will consume the Kurus.

Maid. To-day my lady went to pay her respects to Gándhári.

Bhi. Well then ?

Maid. On our way back, we met Bhánumati. She insolently told my lady——

Bhi. Damn it ! Did the wife of the enemy ridicule her ? What did she say ?

Maid. She said, “Holla Draupadí, is it true that your husbands want five villages. Why then is your hair still untied ?”

Bhi. Do you hear, Sahadeva ?

Saha. It's no strange thing, Sir. She is the wife of Duryodhana ; and 'tis no wonder she will say so. When the flowering plant entwines itself on the poisonous tree, it also acquires its destructive virtue.

Bhi. What did Her Majesty say to this ?

Maid. Why should Her Majesty condescend to reply to her. Were we not with her ?

Bhi. What did you say ?

Maid. I said, "First let your hairs be loosed, and then she will bind her own."

Bhi. (Delighted) Bravo ! It was worthy of you, who are one of us. (*Rising from his seat*) Dear, do not grieve any longer. This is my vow ; I will slay the villain Duryodhana with this terrible mace of mine, and return here to rebind your locks with gory hands.

Drau. Nothing is too difficult for you. But will your brothers approve of it ?

Enter CHAMBERLAIN hastily.

Ch. (In a hurry) Your Highness, Krishna ! Krishna ! [*All rise with folded hands.*]

Bhi. Where's Krishna ?

Ch. He went to the camp of Duryodhana for peace, when the latter tried to take him captive as a friend of the Pándavas.

Bhi. What ? Has he taken him captive ?

Ch. No, he could not. Krishna assumed the Vis'vambhara shape, and sent up a terrible cry, at which the Kuru host fainted ; in the mean time, he has given them the slip. May it please Your Highness to see him.

Bhi. (Laughing) The miscreant endeavours even to confine the Deity ! (*Looking upwards*) Villain, your own folly will destroy you and yours ; the wrath of the Pándavas is merely the occasion !

Saha. Does the villain know who Krishna is?

Bhi. How can he? He is only seen by the spiritual eye of holy anchorets; he can never be known by such as Duryodhana. Let that pass. (To *Chamberlain*) Now what has your king determined on? Does he still think of peace?

Ch. You may yourself hear it, Sir.

(*Trumpet sounds.*)

Hear, Generals of our army. The wrath that sprang up in the mind of His Gracious Majesty at the disgrace of Draupadī, he so long suppressed for fear of doing wrong;—and he even tried to conclude peace with the enemy, to spare kindred blood. But the wrath has kindled anew; and he intends vengeance ‘deep and deadly.’

Bhi. Ha! That’s it! That’s it! His wrath is what is required.

(*Trumpet sounds again.*)

Drau. Lord, why does it sound again and again?

Bhi. My love, a *yajña* is at hand.

Drau. What *yajña* now?

Bhi. The *yajña* of battle. You have arranged for the celebration of it; His Majesty will celebrate it; we four brothers will sacrifice in it; our Krishna will be our instructor; the Kauravas will be the sacrificial beasts; we will sacrifice them, love. Its effect will be the removal of your grief incident to your disgrace. The trumpet invites to this ceremony.

Saha. Let me then go, Your Highness, and prepare for war with the permission of His Majesty.

Bhi. Yes, brother, I will also go.

(*To Draupadī*) Dear, we go then to annihilate the race of the Kurus.

Drau. May you succeed in the fight even as Indra succeeded in crushing the Asura!

Maid. Let me speak a word on my lady's behalf; she also says,—“May you return from war, to fill me with hopes!”

Bhi. We should not talk of hopes now. If Bhima do not succeed in killing *all* his enemies, he will no more return from war.

Drau. My love, speak not so. Do not expose yourself to danger, brooding over my disgrace. The field of battle is a fearful place; take care of yourself.

Bhi. Why do you fear, my love? This language does not befit the mouth of a Kshetriya's daughter. The sea of war is indeed difficult to cross; but never doubt that the Pándavas will easily cross it; you need not fear for that. Farewell.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE 1ST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE—A GARDEN.

[*Bhānumati culling flowers with her maid.*]

Maid. What's this, Your Majesty? You are the consort of king Duryodhana, and, sure, you should not

make so much of this poor dream. What's the fear? One sees and says anything and everything in a dream.

Bhānu. No, girl, this is no common dream.

Maid. Well, let me hear what Your Majesty has seen. If it be an evil dream, I will repeat it to Your Majesty, praise virtue, put *durbá* grass into your hand, telling the names of the gods. By this means, the dream will change its nature.

Bhānu. Then hear me. I dreamed that a mungoose entered our pleasure-house and killed a hundred serpents.

Maid. (*Aside, in fear*) Dear me! this is bad—this is bad! (*Aloud*) Well then.

Bhānu. My dear, I forget the remainder through fear. Please wait a bit. (*Muses.*)

[*After a few moments enter DURYODHANA with CHAMBERLAIN.*]

Duryo. They say an evil of the enemy is to be rejoiced in, however it may have been brought about, and whatever its magnitude. This is true. See, Vinayandhara, hearing that to-day Karna, Jayadratha and others of my best generals have killed Abhimannu, my soul is filled with joy.

Ch. May it please Your Majesty, neither Karna nor Jayadratha is to be praised for this feat.

Duryo. You allude to the fact of Abhimannu's having been a boy, and having been alone and unarmed in the midst of the hostile forces. But then you must remember that they too have vanquished

Bhisma by artifice ; so that we have as much right to rejoice in Abhimannu's fall as they in Bhisma's.

Ch. No, Your Majesty, I don't allude to that : I attribute the success to the power of Your Majesty, which will bring low all your enemies.

Duryo. Oh, you mean that ! But the Pándavas will soon kill Duryodhana with his friends and relatives.

Ch. [*Covering his ears with his hands*] Bless me ! Why does Your Majesty speak thus ?

Duryo. What do I speak ?

Ch. You say, "The Pándavas will soon kill Duryodhana with his friends and relatives." Why have you spoken of such an evil ?

Duryo. True, friend ! Why has my mouth unconsciously given expression to such a thought ? But my mind is uneasy because Bhánumati left the bed this morning without letting me know it. Pray lead me to her.

Ch. (*Aside*) Why has such an expression come out of the king's lips ? Is this the voice of Destiny ? I don't know what calamity it augurs. [*Aloud*] This way, Your Majesty. (*They both go some way.*) Your Majesty, this is a new garden ; it is a beautiful place ; the breeze blows here gently ; the air is filled with fragrance, and swells with the hum of the bee.

Duryo. Well. Do you order my car to be got ready. I will go to battle after seeing Bhánumati.

Ch. Very well, Your Majesty.

Maid. Has Your Majesty recollected it ?

Bhānu. Once it comes and anon it is off.

Duryo. (*Seeing them, aside*) Here is my love, speaking to her maid. I will place myself behind this wood and listen to what she says. (*Hides himself.*)

Maid. Let not Your Majesty be so anxious. Speak out.

Duryo. (*Aside*) Why is she anxious ?

Bhānu. Listen now. That mungoose is very fair-looking ; I observed it with a fixed gaze. By and bye it came to me. Girl, I cannot say more. Since then my mind has been ill at ease. (*Hangs down her head.*)

Duryo. (*Aside*) What does she say ? Nakula,* the son of Madri, is my mortal enemy : did he come to her ? She has conceived a passion for him ? Oh ! Her uneasiness is all owing to that ! Let me hear it to the end.

Maid. Don't be so disconsolate, madam ; tell me the remainder.

Bhānu. Next I went into the pleasure-garden, where it accompanied me.

Duryo. (*Aside, in wrath*) No more listening is necessary ; I will go immediately to take the villain's life. [*Stops after going a little way.*] No, first let me punish this strumpet. (*Draws his sword.*)

Bhānu. Then when I saw the mungoose slay the hundred serpents, the heralds set up their morning cry to awake His Majesty, and I waked.

* The mistake of Duryodhana turns on the word *nakul*, which means a mungoose.

Duryo. (*Doubtfully, aside*) Speaks she of my awaking? Then perhaps she speaks of a dream? Let me hear out; I shall gather it from the reply of her maid.

Maid. Yes, the dream is not a good one.

Duryo. (*Aside*) Bless me! This refers to a dream! (*Sheathes his sword.*) How could it be otherwise? I am the king Duryodhana; and how can my queen be unfaithful? 'Tis a mercy I havn't killed her!

Bhānu. But what shall I do, girl?

Maid. I will tell Your Majesty what. Excuse me but I will speak the truth. This dream is, sure, very bad. First the mungoose in a dream is a bad omen; then it kills a hundred snakes. This is worse.

Bhānu. I fear lest any evil befall His Majesty.

Maid. You may very well be uneasy, but do one thing. Bathe yourself in the Ganges or in the Jumna, and offer gifts to Brahmins, to secure their blessing. Further, celebrate a *homa*;* and culling flowers with your own hands, worship the sun. What more can I say? (*They cull flowers.*)

Duryo. (*Aside*) Sure, this dream is not a good one; moreover, my left eye is shaking. These are to be dreaded. (*Thinking*) But what can this bode particularly? Angira says, the motions of the stars, dreams, &c., have no bearing on men's destinies, and have acquired their importance from fortuitous coincidences.

* A religious ceremony to ward off evil.

What happens, happens *necessarily*; men say it happens because of such and such a thing. Bosh! The enlightened scorn these, and the king Duryodhana looks down upon them.

Bhānu. Lo! The sun is up. (*Puts down the basket of flowers.*)

Maid. Yes, Your Majesty, worship him with your offerings now.

Bhānu. (*Goes forward, and with clasped hands*) God of light! Thou art the eye of this Universe. Do thou accept my devotions; do thou avert any evil that may be hanging over us; grant that His Majesty may be victorious. Pray, damsel, give me the basket; I will worship the god.

(*Duryodhana snatches the basket from the hands of the maid and lets it fall to the ground.*)

Bhānu. Good gracious! You have scattered about all the flowers! (*Seeing the king, hangs down her head.*)

Duryo. (*Laughing*) Gracious me! I have let fall all the flowers! My dear, I am a worthless fellow; do you punish him adequately.

Bhānu. (*Humbly*) Your Majesty, excuse me. I am very anxious on account of a bad dream; I will now worship the sun.

Duryo. No, my love, you needn't do anything of the kind. I have heard it all. No fear. Come, no use of remaining here any more.

Bhānu. I am terribly alarmed.

Duryo. (*Haughtily*) Pooh! You fear! I am the lord of eleven *akshauhinis*—invincible in war; Drona, Karna, Kripa, Aswathámá are my generals—towers of strength all. What then is your fear? My love, you don't know how great you are. You are no less a personage than the consort of the lion-like Duryodhana; you repose under the shelter of the arms of my one hundred brothers. You fear? Tush!

Bhánu. Yes, yes, I needn't fear; but I only wish to see your desires obtained.

Duryo. My only desire is to be at your side, love.

[*Storm sounds inside.*]

Bhánu. (*In fear*) Your Majesty, what's this?

Duryo. No fear, chuck, it's only a storm breaking out; nothing more.

Maid. May it please Your Majesty to go into that wooden house; here's a cloud of dust.

Duryo. Ha! The storm has done me good. My love, let us get in.

Bhánu. My work has not been done; I am sorry for it.

(*Enter CHAMBERLAIN.*)

Ch. (*In a hurry*) Confound it! Confound it!

Duryo. What's the matter?

Ch. It's breaking down.

Duryo. (*Vexed*) What is breaking down? Let me hear it, man?

Ch. The top of Your Majesty's car has gone down.

Duryo. Pish ! And where's the wonder in that, pray ? The storm has broken out, and the top of the car has been blown away ;—nothing strange.

Ch. May it please Your Majesty, 'tis unlucky that it has gone down on the eve of your departing for war.

Bhānu. Your Majesty, these are really evil signs ; pray, celebrate some *sastayana*.

Duryo. (*Slightingly*) Do you speak to the priest about it.

Ch. Very well, Sire. (*Stops after proceeding a little way.*) Your Majesty, the mother of our royal son-in-law and the lady *Duhshalá* are coming this way.

Duryo. (*Aside*) Why do they come ? The Pándavas might do some wrong to Jayadratha for the death of Abhimannu. (*Aloud*) Very well, let them come in.

Ch. Very well, Sire.

(*Exit.*)

(*Enter the mother of JAYADRATHA and lady DUHSHALÁ ; they fall at the feet of DURYODHANA.*)

Mother. Lord of the Kurus, protect us ! Protect us ! We have none else to save us. (*Weeps.*)

Duryo. (*In a hurry*) Never fear, never fear, mother. Has any evil befallen you ? Is all well with Jayadratha ?

Mother. No, not so, Your Majesty.

Duryo. What then ?

Mother. Arjuna has promised to slay my son by sunset.

Duryo. (*Laughing*) Bless me, you are afraid of this! Duhshalá, you weep for this! I thought it was something else. Arjuna is mad now for grief; and who should listen to his ravings? What a silly creature is a woman! Duhshalá, wipe away your tears. Arjuna has no power to do Jayadratha any harm; he is protected by me.

Mother. But my son, the man is desperate for the loss of his son.

Duryo. Tush! Who doesn't know the worth of the Pándavas? If they had had any virtue in them, surely they would not have suffered Draupadí to be dragged by the hair by my orders into the hall and stripped nude by Duhs'ásana, with insulting language. Is not such a circumstance calculated to stir up the wrath of a Kshetriya? But what could Arjuna do?

Mother. He has further promised that if he could not slay Jayadratha by sunset, he would ascend the funeral pyre.

Duryo. (*Laughing*) This is favorable to us. He will not be able to kill Jayadratha, so he will lose his own life, to be sure. If he dies, Yudhisthira follows him (as promise is). So that, mother, after so long a time, this day will see the destruction of my enemies. Is it a thing to be uneasy about? Jayadratha is perfectly safe. My hundred brothers, Karna, Drona, Aswathámá, Kripa, Kritabarmá, myself, we will all protect your son. Who can injure him? Further,

you don't know the might of your son ; and therefore you fear. Yudhisthira, Nakula and Sahadéva are not to be reckoned ; Bhíma and Arjuna are warriors, but they are no match for Jayadratha.

Bhánu. 'Tis true ; but the vow of Arjuna may strike terror into one's heart.

Mother. Yes, child, you have spoken true.

Duryo. Tush ! I am king Duryodhana ; am I to fear the Pándavas ? Bhánumati has conceived a very high opinion of the force of the Pándavas. It is their wont to make vows like this. Have they not vowed to drink Duhsásana's blood and to break the thigh of Duryodhana ? But what have they done ? Depend upon it, this vow of theirs will be as much fulfilled as the others. Who's there ? Go and see if my car is ready ; I will go to war personally and kill Arjuna.

(*Enter CHAMBERLAIN.*)

Ch. Your Majesty, the car is ready.

Duryo. My dear, go into the palace. I go now.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE 2ND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I—A PART OF THE FIELD.

(*Enter a RÁKSHASÍ.*)

Rák. (*Laughs and dances for joy.*) Ha ! This is well. May the war go on for a hundred years to come, so that we may range the field, and eat our

fill ! . We shall have merry time of it, if Arjuna fights to-day, as he did when he killed Jayadratha. But where is my husband ? Let me call him. Ho ! Rudhirapriya ! Rudhirapriya ! Ho ! Hang him ! Rudhirapriya ho !

(*Enter RUDHIRAPRIYA.*)

Rudhi. Who calls me ?

Rák. (*Joyfully*) Ha ! Here he is. You are come, love. I have just brought the corpse of a fat king. Eat, eat.

Rudhi. (*Joyfully*) You have done well ; give it me. I am hungry and thirsty.

Rák. How's that ? You have been going about in the field, and you are hungry and thirsty ?

Rudhi. Was I here ? I went to see Hirimbā. She is disconsolate for the death of Ghatotkacha. But let that pass. What are you doing here ?

Rák. I am not idle. I am gathering no end of food. Many kings have fallen, such as Bhagadatta, Jayadratha, the King of Matsa, Bhúrisrabá, Bālhika, &c. See I have stored up their flesh and blood in a thousand jars, and am looking out for more.

Rudhi. You have done well ; you are a good housewife.

Rák. Has Hirimbā told you anything ?

Rudhi. Of course. She has told me to be with Bhíma to-day ; and I am going to him.

Rák. Why with Bhíma ?

Rudhi. He has promised to drink Duhs'ásana's blood ; and I shall drink after him.

[*Sounds heard.*]

Rák. (*Hearing them*) Look out and see what wailing proceeds from that direction.

Rudhi. (*Seeing*) Dhrishtadyumna has killed Drona.

Rák. Let's then go, and drink his blood.

Rudhi. No, no. He was a Brahmin; and our throats will get burnt if we drink his blood.

Rák. See who comes that way.

Rudhi. (*Seeing*) Oh! Is it not Aswathámá? He comes this way sword in hand. In his fury against Dhrishtadyumna, he might injure us. Let's fly then.

[*They bolt.*]

(*Enter ASWATHÁMÁ.*)

As. (*Aside*) Ha! What a terrible sound! Why does it come? (*Musing.*) Probably either Bhíma or Arjuna has incensed father, and he has made this cry. Why then should I wait for my car? I have my sword in hand; let me go. (*Goes a little.*) What's this? The Pándava army is full of noise and bustle? What's the matter? What's that? What's that? Karna and other distinguished warriors are flying? How's this? (*Aloud*) Ye warriors, why are you flying? For shame! Is it becoming to Kshetrias to renounce the field? Moreover, my father is the general now.

(*Inside*) Does your father live?

As. (*Angrily*) What? Do you dare to speak ill of my father? Why has not as yet the lightning blasted your head? The twelve suns have not yet

risen, nor has the wind of chaos begun to blow; nor have the clouds scowled at the earth. Why then do you speak ill news of my father?

(*Enter* CHARIOTEER.)

Char. Help, Sire! Help! All's lost!

As. (*Aside*) This is Ashwayana, my father's charioteer. (*Aloud*) What's this, friend? Being the charioteer of a mighty hero, you ask help of me!

Char. Alas! Where's your father?

As. Has he been killed?

Char. What shall I say of our bad luck?

As. What do you say? Has father fallen? I don't comprehend you quite; speak out, man. Who has killed him? Is it Bhíma?

Char. No, no.

As. Is it Arjuna?

Char. No, not Arjuna.

As. It is then Krishna?

Char. Not, not Krishna.

As. Who else then could kill my father in this world?

Char. Neither Bhíma, nor Arjuna, nor even Krishna could have killed him, if he had not voluntarily left off his arms for grief.

As. Grief for what?

Char. For you.

As. For me? What do you say? I don't understand you a bit.

Char. Hear me then. While fighting, he heard that Aswathámá had fallen; but he doubted it,

having regard to your immortality. For ascertaining the matter, he asked Yudhisthira, who spoke out "Aswathámá killed," but added in an undertone, "the elephant, that is." The latter speech did not reach your father's ears for the sound of the trumpets. Therefore, concluding you to be dead, he forsook his bow and arrow for grief.

As. (Crying) Alas ! Has he, then, really departed this life ! Woe's me ! Father, father, where have you gone ? *(Sits down and weeps.)*

Char. Bear up, Sir. This is not the place to weep in, nor does it become a hero to do so.

As. My father resigned his arms, and with them his life ; but I am such an ungrateful wretch, that I am still alive when I should have died for grief. *(Falls into a trance.)*

(Enter KRIPÁCHÁRYA.)

Kripá. (In grief) Shame on Duryodhana, shame on Yudhisthira, shame on all the other kings, shame on us, who saw Draupadí dragged by the hair into the assembly ; and who have this day also seen a Brahmin dragged by the hair. All this present evil has befallen us because of the dishonor of a woman ; and the disgrace of the Brahmin will mar us quite. *(Seeing Aswathámá)* Perhaps, Aswathámá has heard of the death of his father. Let me go to him ; but I fear he may work mischief, if he hears of the way in which his sire has been killed. *(Approaching Aswathámá)* What's this, child ? Get up, get up.

As. (*Reviving*) O Father! Where have you gone! You were the best of heroes; you have resigned your life for my sake. Woe's me! (*Weeps.*)

Char. Your uncle is come.

As. (*Lamenting*) Uncle, where is my father? You together went to battle; where have you left him?

Kripá. My child, you are sensible;—think whether it avails anything to weep bitterly.

As. No, I will weep no more; I will give up this life; I will follow him.

Kripá. Are you mad, child? Your father has departed this life, and you, as his grown son, ought to perform *tarpana** for him. You should now think of revenge. Why lament idly?

Char. That is worthy of a hero.

As. That is true, but I am unable to bear his loss; my grief is simply unbearable. (*To his sword*) Weapon, my father took your fellow in his might; he knew no fear; then he resigned it for grief on my worthless account,—not through base fear. I also leave you off. (*Resigns his sword.*)

(*Inside.*)

Hark, gentlemen! The venerable Dronácháryya was the spiritual guide of the Kshetriyas. That he is dead is not such to be regretted; but how can you pass over his disgrace?

As. (*Taking up his sword in anger*) What? Disgrace father?

(*Inside.*)

And what else? He was weeping for his son, having resigned his weapon, when the evil Dhrishtadyumna dragged him by the hair and cut off his head.

As. (*Wrathfully*) What? Has the villain dared to disgrace my father thus?

Kripá. So they all say.

As. Did the rascal dare to lay hands on my father's head?

Char. Sir, he was never so disgraced in his life.

As. (*In great wrath*) Did father come to such dishonor at the hands of this little man, when he had thrown away his arms for me? Sure, he has thrown away his life for grief, or else could this slave touch his head? But I am his son; I am armed. Shall I not trample the villain's head? O you, shame of the Páñchála race! Do you not know I am yet armed? (*Looking to heaven*) O Yudhisthira! Are you not the truth-loving son of Dharma? How could you lie before my father? But you are a damned liar, unworthy of my steel. Arjuna, Bhíma and Krishna, was it also well done of you? He was the best of Brahmins, he was a hero, he was your common spiritual guide, above all, he was my father; how could you tamely look upon his disgrace? But you are evil men, every one of

* Religious merit; here looked on as a person.

you ; and nothing is too low for you. Every one of you was directly or indirectly concerned in this guilt ; and I will forgive none. Bhíma, Arjuna, Krishna,—I will slay all of them.

Kripá. You can do everything, if you will ; you equal Drona in might.

As. Charioteer, bring the car directly ; I will go to the battle.

Char. Very well, Sir ; I go.

[*Exit.*]

Kripá. This is necessary ; who but you can wipe out this disgrace ? It is therefore my heart's desire that you go to battle as the commander-in-chief.

As. That is to be dependent on another.

Kripá. No, no ; there is no Bhisma, no Drona now ; and the forces of Dhritaráshtra will fare ill if you don't lead them. Besides, consider, Duryodhana has no other warrior who could equal you in the field. Methinks, therefore, he will, of his own accord, invest you with the command.

As. If it be so, let us then first see the king. He also is sorrowing for the death of my father ; and my presence will soothe him a little.

Kripá. Very well ; let's first go to His Majesty.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II—ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

[DURYODHANA seated with KARNA.]

Duryo. I say, my friend, what did Dronácháryya mean by renouncing arms while the battle was raging? Fie! It is not for a Brahmin to fight.

Kar. No, Your Majesty, not so.

Duryo. Why then did he act thus?

Kar. His intention was to raise his son Aswathámá to the throne, when both the parties should have destroyed each other in fight. But when he heard of Aswathámá's death, his hopes were blighted; he gave way to despair. "I am a Brahmin," thought he, "what further need of my holding the sword?" and accordingly he resigned his arms.

Duryo. Yes, this is probable.

Kar. No, Your Majesty, this is not my opinion alone; it is the opinion of all. When the king Drupada drove the Brahmin out of his kingdom, he did it because he had understood his motive.

Duryo. Is it so?

Kar. Does not Your Majesty perceive it? It is for this reason that he slighted the deaths of so many warriors on our side.

Duryo. Right, right; there is no doubt of it. First he encouraged Jayadratha; but when Arjuna was bent on killing him, he slighted it; or else could he not have protected the hero, if he had been minded to do so? There's no believing in a Brahmin.

[*Enter KRIPÁ. and ASWATHÁMÁ.*]

Kripá. My child, the king is there ; let us approach him.

As. Very well, Sir.

Both. (*Coming forward*) Long live the king !

Duryo. Welcome ! (*To Kripá.*) Pray accept my respects. (*To Aswathámá*) My friend, you are welcome. Your father has died for me ; grief for him is heavy at my heart. Come, friend, let me soothe my sorrow by embracing you. (*Embraces Aswathámá, who weeps.*)

Kar. What is the use of weeping now ?

Duryo. My friend, do not weep. Remember that I have as much cause of grief as you have. Your father was the friend of my father ; I have, like you, learnt the use of arms from him ; you know full well how much cause of sorrow I have for the loss.

As. The words of Your Majesty have soothed me. But then you must know that I am his son, and father was disgraced while I lived. Who, seeing this, will pray for a son in future ?

Kar. He resigned his arms of his own accord and came by this disgrace. What can you do ?

As. What say you ? What can I do ? Listen then what I mean to do. He who has done this deed, they who have encouraged him, they who have looked on it, they who have taken up arms on behalf of the Pándavas, they who belong to the Páñchála race, old or young, infants or sucklings, all—all shall be put to the edge of the sword.

Kar. (*Laughing*) Doing is not so easy as saying.

As. (*Wrathfully*) What is not easy? You are the pupil of Parasuráma; you can say what he did to avenge the disgrace of his sire. I will do as much.

Duryo. Of course, you are no less powerful.

Kripá. Your Majesty, he is prepared to take the conduct of the army on himself; and methinks, if he puts forth his best, he can destroy the world—who are the Pándavas? Do you then, Sire, invest him with the command. You will then bring about the destruction of your enemies.

Kar. (*Laughing*) His father has done much; and he will surely do more.

Kripá. No, no, Sir, speak not so. (*To Duryo.*) This is my request, Sire; do you place him in command.

Duryo. This would have been possible before; but I have already determined on putting Karna in command.

Kripá. Your Majesty will please consider whether such a course would not be doing injustice to my nephew. He would sure slay his enemies, even if he played a subordinate part; but he would feel hurt at the slight.

As. Whether His Majesty put me in command or not, at the break of the morrow, I will slay the wicked Krishna first, then put the Pándavas to the sword, last of all, hew the Pánc'hála race in pieces.

Kar. And could we not do all this?

As. No, Sir, I don't say that; you see what an injury I have suffered at their hands.

Kar. Fool! Let him who has come by grief, cry himself sober; but he who is really strong, does not fill the air with empty vaunts like you, but shows his mettle by his performances.

As. (*In high wrath*) What! Do you dare say this to my face? You are the worthless son of Rádhá; you are the disgrace of the charioteer class.

Kar. I may be anything;—what's the use of bringing in the question of origin. A man has no control over his birth; he has no choice of it; but I have power; I am not powerless.

As. And am I powerless? You advise me to calm myself by weeping! Why,—is my weapon weak like yours? Or am I a warrior like you, who take to your heels, when the strife is at the hottest?

Kar. You are an ass! As a low Brahmin, you are full of idle talk. Whatever the might of my weapon, I did not leave it aside for fear, as your father did for fear of Dhrishtadyumna.

As. (*Transported*) What! Slave! Do you dare insult the memory of my father? What do you know of the art of fighting? Whether my father was a coward or a hero, is not unknown to any. His daily achievements the world has seen;—why he resigned his arms is known to Yudhisthira—that mirror of truth. Where then did you fly for life?

Kar. To be sure I did; you are the only brave man living. But I have shrewd doubts concerning

your father. That he resigned his arms could not be the reason why he could not prevent the little man from bearding him. What befell Draupadí (who, it must be said, is a woman) in the assembly, has this day befallen your father.

As. Villain, do you presume upon the favor of the monarch? And is it for this that you give such rein to your rascally tongue? When Dhrishtadyumna laid his hands on my father, he did not prevent him, either for grief or for any other reason; but you are a puissant warrior; I will lay my foot on your head; do you prevent it, if you can. (*Raises his foot.*)

Both Duryo. and Kripá. What's this! What's this! (*Aswathámá kicks at Karna's head.*)

Kar. You are a Brahmin, or else this act were your last.

As. Fellow, because I am a Brahmin! Here I un-Brahmin myself (*cuts in twain his sacred thread*). Come now, take your weapon. Either take your weapon, or on your knees ask for my forgiveness.

(*They fight; at length Duryodhana holds back As. and Kripá., Karna.*)

As. Uncle, unhand him, he dares insult my father's memory!

Kar. Your Majesty, don't hold him; I will teach him a lesson; he has presumed upon the forbearance of a gentleman.

As. Let me go, Your Majesty; I will kill him; why will you save him from my hands? Do you do so because of your friendship for him? Is he worthy

of it? He is the son of a charioteer ; he is a churl ; you are a sovereign of the lunar race ; he is by no means worthy of you ; free him.

Kar. (*Raising his sword*) Shame of Brahmins, die at my hands.

Duryo. This, sure, is the folly of both of you.

Kripá. Of course ; you forget your duty, and fall out amongst yourselves. (*To As.*) My son, desist ; it is I who command you.

As. Very well, I desist. Your Majesty, he is your dear friend ; you have made him the commander. Pray send him to the field ; you will see what he does for fear of Bhíma and Arjuna. But this is my vow, so long as he is not killed, I will not draw my sword ; here I forsake it. (*Forsakes his weapon.*)

Kar. It doesn't matter much.

(*Inside.*)

Villain, did you not drag Draupadí by the hair ? You rascal, you shame of Dritaráshtra ! I have got you after many a day. Where will you go now ? O Karna, O Duryodhana, O Sakuni, listen, all of you. When the villain dragged Draupadí by the hair and stripped her nude, I vowed to drink his blood. Duhs'ásana is now in my grasp ; do you come and rescue him. (*All are alarmed.*)

As. [*Tauntingly*] Ho mirror of heroism, are you not the pupil of Parasuráma ? You ridicule Droná-cháryya ; you are the commander ; you have your

sword ; it is your duty to protect every body ; do you then protect Duhs'ásana from Bhíma.

Kar. (*Rising*) Bhíma has not the power to touch a hair of the Prince's head. No fear, Prince, I come.

As. Your Majesty, Bhisma breathes no longer, or my father ; I too have resigned my arms ; do you not, pray, depend too much on Karna. I don't think he can do much ; do you go quick to the rescue of your brother.

Duryo. (*Rising*) Who can touch the body of my brother ? Who's there ? Bring my car. I go.

(*Goes out quickly.*)

As. (*Seeing the fight*) Bless me ! What's this ! Uncle, this is bad. Arjuna has obstructed Karna and Duryodhana, to enable his brother to fulfil his promise. Bhíma will without let drink Duhs'ásana's blood. Alas ! Alas ! Hang my promise ; I have not promised ; breach here is better than the observance ; I may go to hell, but I will rescue Duhs'ásana from Bhíma. (*About to take up arms.*)

(*Inside.*)

What's this ! You are the son of the great Droná-cháryya ; you break your promise !

Kar. My son, the gods are against it ; do not take up your arms !

As. Is this a celestial voice ? Alas ! Even the gods are with the Pándavas ! What am I to do ? If I can't protect Duhs'ásana, what then do I for Duryodhana ? My uncle, I regret my hasty promise ; but

what is past, is past. Do you go, Sir, and see if you can do anything.

Kri. Yes, I go ; but I am doubtful whether I shall be able to do anything.

ACT IV.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

(*Enter BHIMA, taking DUHS'ASANA by the throat.*)

Bhi. (*Gnashing his teeth*) Where shall you go ? You have fallen into the grasp of the Destroyer. Where shall you fly ? Don't you remember how you dragged Draupadī by the hair ? Now pay for that. You deprived her of her cloth ; and here I deprive you of your life, rascal. (*Throws Duhs'āsana on the ground, and killing him with torture, rends his breast, drinks his blood and dances.*) O ye warriors ! Look on this. Now I have fulfilled one vow, but another yet clamours for fulfilment. Duhs'āsana dragged Draupadī by the hair, and I promised to drink his life-blood, and the haughty Duryodhana, the warlike Karna (*seeing around*) have not been able to prevent me, although I have done it to their face. Now I am seeking for Duryodhana. Where is he ? He is not here. I go to seek him in other directions.

[*Exit.*]

(*Enter* CHARIOTEER, *carrying* DURYODHANA *in his arms, who is insensible.*)

Char. Kripácháryya is now engaged in assisting Karna; let me take this opportunity to take away His Majesty, lest the wicked Bhima do to him as he has done to Duhsásana. (*Goes a little.*) Let me sit a little in the shade of this tree, taking him in my lap. Here the breeze is cool, and His Majesty may regain his senses. (*Looking around*) I see no one here; perhaps all have fled for fear of Bhima. But why is the king not recovering yet? As when the mad elephant has destroyed the forest, leaving only a solitary *Sál* tree, the forest pines in desolation and in ruin, even such is the condition of the Kuru race; His Majesty is the sole remnant. Fortune—that malicious goddess—has set her face entirely against them; or else why should Bhima be able to fulfil his vow, without let or hinderance?

Duryo. (*Reviving.*) What power has Bhima to fulfil his vow? Charioteer, you have taken me here? Hie to Duhsásana with me.

Char. Your Majesty, no further need.

Duryo. (*Wrathfully.*) No further need? The villain will drink my brother's life-blood? Have you become devoid of anger, shame or tenderness?

Char. Your Majesty, he did that long ago. What will you do now?

Duryo. What! Has he done so? Speak out, man.

Char. The villain long ago fulfilled his vow.

Duryo. What! Does Duhs'ásana breathe no longer? Is Duhs'ásana dead?

Char. Sire, what shall I say?

Duryo. (*In grief.*) Alas! Have I lost Duhs'ásana? (*Weeping.*) Brother, you had made yourself their foe for my sake; but I am so worthless that I could not protect you. Charioteer, what has come to pass! What have you done! Did you fly with me, leaving the boy in the hands of the enemy?

Char. Your Majesty, what could I do? You became insensible by the blows of the enemy; our car went to pieces by his arrows. Consequently I was compelled to do this.

Duryo. You have done wrong. What if I was insensible? Why did you not suffer me to regain consciousness by the mace of Bhima? Then, either Bhima or myself should have lain on the ground drenched with Duhs'ásana's gore.

Char. Speak not so, Sire.

Duryo. (*In grief.*) Should I not speak so? Are you mad? My friends and relatives are gone. What's the use of my reigning now? What's the use of victory? What's the use of life? Alas! Alas! What have I left! Where is brother Duhs'ásana? O Duhs'ásana! (*Falls insensible.*)

Char. Help! Help! ho! (*Fans the king with his cloth.*)

(*Enter SUNDARAKA at a little distance.*)

Sun. (*In a loud voice*) Holla gentlemen! Do you know where is king Duryodhana? No reply. Let me ask these;—and what's the use of doing that? They have been wounded in the fight, and are undergoing medical treatment. Let me see this way. Do you know where is king Duryodhana? Why do they weep on seeing me? Perhaps their leader has fallen in battle. They are sure dispirited. Whom then shall I ask? Let me go that way. No, there's nothing there but wail. Bless me! whom then shall I ask about it? Alas! Alas! All's lost. Is this the will of Heaven? The king Duryodhana was the master of eleven *akshauhinis* strong; he was the head of a hundred brothers; he numbered amongst his generals, warriors like Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Kripa, Kritabarmá and Aswathámá;—he was the sovereign of this entire Bhárata. Alas! Alas! How are the mighty fallen! Nobody now knows where the king is. (*Sighs.*) And why not should this be? He slighted the advice of Vidura and Bhishma, and hugged to the bosom the evil counsel of Sakuni, to engage Yudhishthira at dice; he disgraced Draupadí in the assembly. And he now reaps the fruit of all that. (*Looking at a distance.*) There's somebody lying there. (*Proceeds a little.*) Merciful Heavens! This is king Duryodhana. Alas! He who used to lie on snow-white beds of down,—on a golden couch,—is now stretched on the dusty ground. Heart-rending sight! (*Approaching.*) 'Victory to Your Majesty!

Duryo. (*Regaining consciousness.*) Charioteer, who is at such a moment proclaiming my victory?

Char. Your Majesty, Sundaraka has come from the field.

Duryo. (*Sitting up*) Sundaraka, all's well with my friend, Karna?

Sun. Yes, Sire, he still lives; that's the only comfort.

Duryo. Why? Has he lost everything in the fight with Arjuna? Has he lost his charioteer and his horses? Has his car been shattered?

Sun. No, Sire; it's only his hopes which have been destroyed. Grief sits heavy at his heart.

Duryo. What's the matter? Let me hear it, man.

Sun. Yes, Sire. Surly the fall of the Prince Duhs'asana—

Duryo. I know all that,—what else?

Sun. The enraged general then began to pour a volley of arrows on the wicked Bhíma.

Duryo. Well then?

Sun. Then both the armies met there;—a cloud of dust now darkened the air;—terrible sounds like the cries of the lion or the roar of the clouds at the universal destruction, were heard underneath the cloudy canopy; the flash of the weapons resembled lightning.

Duryo. Where then was Arjuna?

Sun. He was then fighting with Kripácháryya. Fearing that Bhíma might come by the worse, anon

Krishna drove the car of Arjuna to the spot and blew his *Panchajanya* shell ; the blast filled all the air.

Duryo. The miscreant ! It is he who is the root of all this evil. The Pándavas—what are they, devoid of the artifice of Krishna ? The fellow had vowed not to draw the sword in the war of Bharata ; but Bhishma made him break his vow.

Sun. No, he did not draw the sword, sure ; he only took up a chariot-wheel.

Duryo. It comes to the same thing. It is not easy to understand his wiles.

Sun. Then when Brisasena saw his father attacked by both Bhíma and Arjuna, he got wroth, and setting up a terrible cry, shot a volley of arrows at Arjuna's car.

Duryo. What do you say ? Our Brisasena ? Well then ?

Sun. Arjuna said to Brisasena, "Brisasena, your father Karna is no match for me ; who are you then—You are a child ;—go and play with some other child." Brisasena replied to this with a shower of arrows, which cut Arjuna's body all over.

Duryo. (*Joyfully*) Bravo ! Brisasena ; bravo ! Go on, man.

Sun. Then Arjuna, growing frantic from pain, shot a dazzling arrow at Brishasena. The arrow flew like a meteor, leaving behind it a train of golden fire. Arjuna now haughtily calling out, said, "O Duryodhana ! O Karna ! O Kaurava generals ! You have with your

combined forces slain my Abhimannu in my absence ; now I in your presence slay Brishasena."

Duryo. What insolence !

Sun. At this a loud wail arose from the Kaurava army ; his bow and arrow dropped from Karna's hands ; tears trickled down from his eyes ; he had no speech ; he stood like a statue.

Duryo. Gracious me ! What then ?

Sun. Your Majesty, look to the might of the boy. He gave a deafening shout and by an arrow splintered to shivers Arjuna's weapon, while it was half-way.

Duryo. (*Delighted.*) Bravo Brishasena ! This is as it should be ;—nothing less is expected of the son of Karna. Well then ?

Sun. Your Majesty, I have never seen a fight more fearful ;—O it was a terrible sight ! But after they had fought long, I could not see the result. All of a sudden, a loud uproar was heard in the Pándava host,—and sounds of lamentation in the Kaurava army. What shall I say, Your Majesty ? I then saw Brishasena lying on the ground, his breast wounded by arrows,—without his car, without his horses.

Duryo. (*In grief.*) No more is necessary ; I have understood it. Our Brishasena breathes no longer. What a loss ! (*Weeping.*) O Brishasena ! Where have you gone ! How affable you were ! You respected me like a father ; how shall I outlive such a loss ! How shall friend Karna live ! You were the only son of your father. How beautiful was your

face, and how graceful your eyes,—how tender your youth. Shall Karna be able to live when he sees your face in death? What a calamity!" (*Weeps bitterly.*)

Char. Weep no more, Your Majesty. Fate is inexorable.

Duryo. Charioteer, I did not dream that I should be made to suffer so much.

Char. What avails weeping, Your Majesty?

Duryo. No, I have no grief. I have lost so many friends, so many relatives in this war of Kurukshetra, that my heart has at last ceased to feel. Sundaraka, what is friend Karna doing now?

Sun. He became disconsolate for the loss of his son; and wishing to resign his life, engaged in fight with Arjuna. Seeing this, Bhíma, Nakula and Sahadeva came to the aid of Arjuna and surrounded his car. S'alya tried to soothe Karna; but he is disconsolate. He called me and gave this note, written in his blood, to be given to Your Majesty. (*Presents the letter.*)

Duryo. Charioteer, read the letter, please. Let me hear the contents.

Char. Very well, Sire. (*Reads.*)

“Victory to Your Majesty!

I embrace Your Majesty in imagination, and send you the following lines from the field of battle. Your Majesty was always pleased to call me the best of warriors—the warrior *par excellence*. Your love for me has been greater than that you bore to your one

~~hundred~~ brothers. You hoped firmly to vanquish the Pándavas by my arms. But what have I been able to do? I could not even kill Bhíma—the rancorous enemy of Duhs'ásana! Now may it please Your Majesty to depend solely upon your own arms, or to weep your bosom empty. Farewell for ever!

Karna."

Duryo. (*In grief.*) Charioteer, has Karna written this? (*Looking to Heaven.*) Friend, Karna, I am suffering sore for Brishasena; why do you add to my grief by your reproach? Sundaraka, what is he doing now?

Sun. Wishing to die, he has left off his coat of mail, and is asking for fight.

Duryo. Do you go speedily and tell him that our lives are indeed no more worth living;—no doubt of that. But we should not die now; let us first rid the world of the Pándavas and witness the lamentation of their family. Then we, two friends, shall resign our existences. Now he should not think that Brishasena was his son, and I, that Duhs'ásana was my brother. Hie to him with this missive.

Sun. Very well, Sire.

[*Exit.*]

Duryo. Charioteer, go and see why the sounds of a car have suddenly ceased.

Char. Your Majesty, your father and mother are coming.

Duryo. (*Flurried.*) Confusion ! How shall I show my face to them ? Friend, tell them I am not here.

Char. That can't be, Your Majesty. You are the only surviving son of your parents ; and it will break their heart, if you refuse to see them. That must not be. They have none save you.

Duryo. That's over true ; but how shall I see them ? I had left them with Duhs'ásana ; now by ill fortune I have lost Duhs'ásana. How shall I now meet them without my brother ? What shall I say ?

Char. What can Your Majesty do ? Pray soothe them as best you can. Nothing more is possible. (*Looks at the way.*)

(*Enter at a distance DHRITARÁSHTRA and GÁNDHÁRI, with SANJAYA.*)

Dhri. Sanjaya, does my Duryodhana live ? Where is he ?

Gán. Under which tree lies my Duryodhana ? Pray take us there.

San. This way, Your Highnesses. Look ! there His Majesty sits alone under the banyan tree.

Gán. (*Weeping.*) Why do you speak of his being alone ? Where are his one hundred brothers ?

San. (*Advancing.*) Victory to Your Majesty ! Your father and mother have come.

Dhri. Where is my Duryodhana ? Come, child, let me embrace you. •

Gán. My love, why are you silent? Is your body sore, because of the fight. (*Gently lays her hand on Duryodhana's body.*)

Dhri. Why are you silent, child? You were never so cruel.

Gán. (*Weeping.*) Child, child, if you do not speak with us, who else will? Whom have we left else? Neither Duhs'ásana nor Durmarsana breathes any longer.

Duryo. (*Abashed.*) I alone have sullied the glory of the Kuru race. Do you yet call me your son? 'Tis I who have reduced you to this pass; that your eyes are dropping tears night and day is owing to me.

Gán. What avails regret now? My son, you are our only stay—you are the 'thrid' of our lives. May you live long!

Duryo. Mother, this blessing is not proper. You have lost your one hundred sons through me, and you pray for my long life?

San. May it please Your Majesty, speak not so.

Duryo. And why not? What do you say, Sanjaya? What shall I do again with life?

Dhri. (*Gently passing his hand over Duryodhana's body.*) My son, cheer us up with words of hope; cheer up your despairing mother.

Duryo. What hopes can I give you? My only prayer now is, may Kunti lament for her sons even as you lament for yours; nothing but this.

Gán. My lot is not the worst possible, seeing that you are still alive. What is past is past ; fight no more, my son, I beseech you ;—listen to my word.

Dhri. My son, listen to the advice of your mother. We have none save you. Consider what a warrior was Bhíma, but Arjuna vanquished even him. All the world now looks upon Arjuna as the destroyer. Their last vow is to kill you. My child, do not be carried away by a sense of self-humiliation ; do not go to war again.

Duryo. You forbid me to go to war. Well, what shall I do then ?

Gán. Better late than never ; listen now to what your uncle Vidura says.

San. Yes, Your Highness, that's right.

Duryo. Sanjaya, am I still to listen to advice ?

San. Speak not so, Your Majesty. So long as a man lives, he should make his conduct square with the advice of the wise.

Duryo. (*Rather angrily.*) Well, Sanjaya, you are one of the wise. Do you point out to me the proper course.

Dhri. What's that, child ? Why do you get angry at the good advice of Sanjaya ? If you listen, I myself will tell you what.

Duryo. Let Your Highness say it.

Dhri. In brief, do not fight any longer. Concede the demands of Yudhisthira and conclude peace.

Gán. Yes, child, do so.

Duryo. Mother is out of herself for the loss of her sons; Sanjaya is a fool; but, my father, how can you speak thus? When I had all, Krishna came to sue for peace; I then refused. Now I have lost my one hundred brothers—I have lost my grandfather,—I have lost Drona,—I have lost all my friends and acquaintances—I have none. Should I now go to sue for peace, for the sake of this worthless life—should I stoop to such indignity for this clay body of mine? Ho Sanjaya, you are well versed in politics; say whether princes ever conclude peace with weak enemies. Now I am fallen;—I am forlorn. The Pándavas have everything. Why then would they accept my offer?

Dhri. Yes, that's true; but Yudhisthira might listen to me; even now he would not disregard me. Further he loves peace; he doesn't love war.

Duryo. Why so?

Dhri. His vow is to resign his life, should a single brother of his die. It is for this reason that he is for peace.

Gán. That's true.

Duryo. But consider, my father, Yudhisthira has vowed to resign his existence if a single brother of his dies; I have lost one hundred. Why should I then strive to save myself?

Gán. But what shall you do, my child?

Duryo. What shall I do? Should I not slay the villain who drank my brother's life-blood?

Gán. (*Weeping.*) My Duhs'ásana, my Durnā-sana, my Vikárna,—where have you gone? Woe's me! I have one hundred sources of grief!

[*All weep.*]

San. What's this? Your Highnesses came to soothe His Majesty; but you yourselves have succumbed to grief!

Dhri. Duryodhana, we have none else; do you forsake your present determination.

Duryo. My dear father, more words are unnecessary. Your condition resembles that of king Sagara. You know how powerful were the sons of Sagara. But at last he lost all. Why then should you forbid me to go to war? Do give me your permission, Sire;—otherwise I shall be guilty of an un-Kshetriya-like action.

(*Loud sounds heard inside.*)

Gán. Sanjaya, why do such loud sounds proceed from the field?

San. Many kinds of sound are heard in the field of battle.

Gán. No, friend, these seem to be sounds of loud wailing. Something important must have taken place.

Duryo. Pray do give me permission to hasten to the field. My luck is bad; I don't know what evil news comes next.

Gán. My son, wait a bit more.

Dhri. If you have set your heart on killing your enemies, please listen to one word of mine. Is it not possible to injure them secretly ?

Duryo. 'Good gracious ! They are destroying us publicly ; and shall I resort to secret means ?

Gán. My son, you are alone ; - how shall you fight with them ?

Duryo. Mother, 'tis true I am alone ;—but if Heaven smile upon me, in a moment I can cut off the Pándavas.

(*Enter CHARIOTEER.*)

Char. (*In grief.*) All's lost ! Your Majesty !

Duryo. What's the matter ? What's the matter ?

Char. What shall I say, Your Majesty ? (*Weeping*) General Karna has lain in the field to-day.

Duryo. (*In grief.*) What do you say ? Friend Karna lives no longer ? (*Drops down ; the others tend him.*)

Dhri. Alas ! Alas ! All's lost. Bhishma, Drona, Karna—my one hundred sons—none remain. Is this Thy will ? My son, arise, arise.

Gán. Arise, my son ; what shall you do ?

Duryo. (*Sitting up.*) My friend, why have you left me ? How have I offended you ? Was Brishasena alone dear to you, that you have followed him ? (*Weeps bitterly.*) Was I destined for all this ? The friend of my bosom has gone, and I am still alive ! O fie !

Dhri. Pray, child, desist.

Duryo. No, Sire, I do not grieve; I have no sorrow, no grief; what if I have lost all? None under the sun enjoys immunity from deprivation. But the regret is this that my friends and relatives have fallen through the hands of the enemy, (*weeps*,) and that I have not been able to crush him yet.

Gán. Weep no more, my dear.

Dhri. Desist, my son, desist.

San. Calm yourself, Your Majesty! What avails weeping now?

Duryo. What do you say? My dear friend has laid down his life for me; and none of you prevented him; but when I shed some idle tears for him, you prevent me! Charioteer, who has done this? Who has robbed my friend of his precious life?

Char. Sire, it is Arjuna.

Duryo. O! The tidings of Karna's death had lashed the ocean of my grief into a furious agitation; now the volcanic fire of anger has dried up the waters. Sires, do you permit me to go to war; I will slay Arjuna and Bhíma, who have killed Karna and Dúh-s'ásana.

Dhri. How do I wish that it may be so! But when I think of the giant Bhíma, my soul is loath to let you go.

Gán. He who has killed my one hundred sons—do you intend to fight with that man of blood? Never do so.

Duryō. No, mother, persuade me not.

Dhri. If you must go to war, should you not place some one in command?

Duryō. I have done so.

Dhri. Whom have you placed in command? Eh! Salya or Aswathámá?

Duryō. No further need of Salya—no further need of Aswathámá. I have invested my soul with the command, by sprinkling it with the ‘eye-offending brine.’ This general will either kill Bhíma and Arjuna, or itself sleep in the field.

(*Inside.*)

Ho soldiers, do you know where king Duryodhana is? Why do you fear? Why do you fly? Tell us, Sirs.

Char. The two are searching you.

Duryō. Who?

Char. Bhíma and Arjuna.

Gán. (*Alarmed.*) What’s to be done then?

Duryō. Let them come; I have my mace.

Gán. (*Weeping.*) Me miserable! What’s to befall me next?

Duryō. Mother, why do you fear? Sanjaya, do you take father and mother to the camp. I have now got those in whose blood to drown all my sorrows.
(*Takes up his mace.*)

Dhri. My son, wait a moment; let me see what they come here for.

(*Enter BHÍMA and ARJUNA, unarmed.*)

Bhi. O adherents of Duryodhana! That Duryodhana who deceived the Pándavas at the play at dice—who poisoned one of us—who sent us to house of lac—who dragged Draupadí by the hair, and tried to render her nude,—who called the Pándavas his ‘slaves’—who was the head of a hundred brothers, numbering Duhs’ásana, &c.,—who boasts of the friendship of Karna, the ruler of Anga and the best of warriors, we have come to see that same Duryodhana, not in anger. Tell us where he is.

Dhri. Ho Sanjaya, he is swaggering much.

San. Sire, at first he showed his mettle in action; now he is doing so in word.

Duryo. Charioteer, go and tell them I am here.

Char. Very well, Sire. (*Proceeding a little, Gentlemen, His Majesty is here; he is talking with his royal parents.*)

Arj. (*Entreating.*) Brother, listen to me; no use of going there. Their Highnesses are disconsolate for the loss of their sons; our presence will aggravate their grief. Let us return to the camp.

Bhi. Fool! Since we have come thus far, should we go away without paying our respects to them? (*Coming forward*) Ho Sanjaya, convey our respects to our royal uncle and aunt; or, what is better, let us ourselves go to them. (*Comes up and says to Arjuna.*) Brother, let us first do that what we have come here for; and then we shall pay our respects.

Aj. Your Highnesses, that Karna through whose arms Duryodhana had hoped to vanquish the Pándavas, and who looked down on all, has just now fallen a victim to my bow and arrow. Pray accept my respects. (*Bows low.*)

Bhi. Well said ! Let me also say my say. My royal uncle, that Bhíma who has exterminated the Kuru race, who has drunk Duhs'ásana's gore, and who shall slay Duryodhana, pays his respects to you. (*Bows low.*)

Dhri. Villain, have you come to mock me ? To gain victory in fight is not an extraordinary thing for a Kshetriya. Why then are you so boastful ?

Bhi. Uncle, pray do not take it amiss. I have only come to let you know that I have paid their deserts those who committed that deed of shame in the assembly. Do you know ? I have not come to display my might, or to sing my praises. Pray, Sir, don't you remember that day ?

Duryo. Villain, do you brag of your misdeeds before these old folks ? You are my slaves, won at dice ; Draupadí is also my slave-girl ; I did drag her by the hair—I did so ; and you may kill me if you can, but what did Bhisma, Drona and Karna to you, that you slew them ? But you have not as yet been able to conquer me ; and therefore have still small reason to boast in such fashion. Scoundrels, come on ; I will at once send you to the death.

(*Prepares to strike ;* DHRITARĀSHTRA *holds* DURYODHANA *and makes him sit down.*)

Arj. My brother, what's the use of getting angry ? We have vindicated our might by deeds ; let him vent his bile a little in wordy ebullitions.

Bhi. What for shall we bear his rascally tongue ? (*To Duryodhana.*) Varlet, I would outright have sent you after Duhs'āsana, but that Their Highnesses are here. Thank your stars for it.

Duryo. Shame of Pándavas, do you not know that I am determined to slay you by this mace of mine ?

Bhi. Of course ; whether you succeed or not doesn't matter greatly ! You will see who slays whom ; your days are numbered. But live this day ; to-morrow I will paint myself in your gore.

(*Inside.*)

O Bhíma ! O Arjuna ! It is the wish of king Yudhisthira that you should perform the funeral ceremonies of your dead friends and relatives. The day is far gone, return to the camp with the army.

Both. Very well.

[*Exeunt.*]

(*Inside.*)

Ho Arjuna ! You are a mighty warrior ; where do you fly now ? So long I did not draw the sword for wrath towards Karna ; and you have acquired a cheap reputation for heroism in my absence. I am Aswathámá ; I will destroy the Pándavas. You dared disgrace my father. Shall I let you off ?

Dhri. (*Delighted.*) Duryodhana, Aswathámá is coming. He is no common warrior; he is even more puissant than his father. Do you receive him properly.

Duryo. What's the use of his assistance?

Dhri. No, my child; he is a mighty warrior; he will serve you greatly.

(*Enter ASWATHÁMÁ.*)

As. Victory to Your Majesty!

Duryo. Welcome, Sir.

As. Your Majesty, be anxious no more. Karna spoke of welcome things; but you have seen how he has realized his promises. Now I draw my sword, and will kill every one of them. Permit me, Sire.

Duryo. (*Impatiently.*) Sir, you speak of drawing the sword because Karna has fallen in the fight? Why so, friend? Let me also sleep in the field; and then you may draw your sword. What is the difference between Karna and Duryodhana?

As. (*Wrathfully.*) What! Still you cherish the memory of Karna with love, and slight me! Very well, Sire.

[*Exit.*]

Dhri. (*In grief.*) My child, what have you done! What have you done! You have broken with such a man at such a moment!

Duryo. Why? What have I told him? I have spoken nothing but the truth. Karna was the friend of my heart;—he was to me more precious than life; in my presence the fellow had desired the death of that Karna; what then is the difference between him and Arjuna? Both of them are my enemies.

Dhri. Do what you like. You are not to blame; it is all owing to my luck. What is to be done now? (*To Sanjaya.*) Ho Sanjaya, do you go to Aswatháma, and say to him, “Aswatháma, do you not remember that you sucked the breast of Gándhári with Duryodhana, do you not remember that Dhritaráshtra dandled you in his lap? Considering all this, you should not be offended with Duryodhana, if he has spoken to you harshly under the influence of grief. Remember that your parent came by disgrace, believing the lie of Yudhisthira, consider your own promise, and act accordingly.”

San. Very well, Sire.

[*Exit.*]

Duryo. I go to war; I can't delay any longer.

Dhri. Gándhári, let us go then; what shall we do here? Let us go to Salya's camp with our chariot-
eer.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT V.

A CAMP.

(*Enter YUDHISTHIRA and DRAUPADÍ, with her MAID and CHAMBERLAIN.*)

Yud. (*Sighing, aside.*) Bless me ! What has it come to ! We have defeated and killed such redoubted warriors as Bhishma and Drona—we have slain the snakes, Karna and Salya—we have wellnigh attained complete victory. But why has Bhíma suddenly pledged himself to such a vow ? I fear lest we lose all at this stake. (*Reflects and says to Chamberlain.*) Hie to Sahadeva and tell him that hearing of Bhíma's dreadful vow to take Duryodhana's life by sunset, or failing of it, to quit his own, the latter has hidden himself. Tell my brother to send out his men in different directions, promising reward to any that should be able to discover him ; let the spies search forest and glen, and every obscure nook.

Ch. Very well, Your Majesty.

Yud. Further, let the spies search such places as are made vocal by the song of birds, such where two persons should seem to confer in low voices, such as are marked with foot-prints that are likely to have come from Duryodhana.

Ch. Very well, Sire. (*Proceeding a little.*) May it please Your Majesty, Panchálaka has come.

Yud. Send him in.

Ch. Here he is. I go, Sire.

[*Exit.*]

(*Enter PANCHĀLAKA.*)

Pan. Victory to Your Majesty !

Yud. Have you received any tidings of Duryodhana ?

Pan. Yes, Your Majesty, we have got him.

Yud. Have you seen him ?

Pan. Ask of fight, Sire.

Drau. (*In alarm.*) Are they fighting ?

Pan. Yes, Your Majesty.

Yud. My love, what's the fear in that ? You know the might of Bhíma ; he will destroy his enemy in a twinkling. No fear. My friend, tell me how and where you found Duryodhana.

Pan. Listen, Sire. You killed Salya. Then Sahadeva went to make root and branch work of the family of Karna ; Dhrishtadyumna manœuvred for the protection of the troops ; Kripa, Kritabarmá, Aswathámá fled from the field. Duryodhana hearing of the vow of the prince Bhímsena, took to his heels and went we knew not where.

Yud. Well then ?

Drau. Proceed, proceed, man.

Pan. Then Krishna, Bhíma, Arjuna—all three mounted one car and went as far as Samanta, in search of the run-away ; but without success. Now we became very anxious and fell to deploring the circumstance ; but none more than the Prince. At this nick of time, in came a villager in breathless haste, and said, "Two men had probably hidden themselves

beneath the waters of yonder lake, for foot-prints of two men are to be seen on the shore. But one of them has, it seems, gone back, as is to be gathered from the opposite direction to which the other foot-prints point." We hied to the spot and saw that it was true.

Krishna said—"Duryodhana knows the art of *ialastamā*, and it is ten to one he has hidden himself beneath the waters of the lake." Hearing this, the Prince Bhīma plunged in and called out Duryodhana, saying, "Ho Duryodhana, you are very proud, but where is your pride now? I am Bhīma; I had vowed to drink Duhsāsana's blood; I have fulfilled my vow. You had promised to kill me; but why haven't you as yet fulfilled your promise? You are a member of the lunar race, (and be d—d to you); you have still your mace with you; why then do you hide yourself in such guise? Is this your pride, you dog? Go, hang yourself, for having stooped to the ignominy of hiding yourself for life. You are the shame of the Kshetriya race." Hearing this, the villain could no longer remain quiet. He gave a tremendous cry, and began to tumble the waters.

Yud. Still he didn't rise?

Pan. Yes, Your Majesty. As in days of yore, the fountain of poison gushed out from the bosom of the deep, even so did he rise with his mace.

Yud. Good; he has acted like a Kshetriya.

Drau. Did the fight commence soon after?

Pan. Anon, Your Majesty. He rose and said to Prince Bhīma,—"Holla Bhīma! What did you

say! I am king Duryodhana; shall I hide myself for fear of you? I had hidden myself here for shame in not having been able to this day to uproot the Pándavas. He then ascended the coast, put down his mace on the ground and looked around. There was none on his side—no friend, no relative; he sighed. “Lord of the Kurus,” said Bhíma, “it avails not now to sorrow for your friends and relatives. We have all,—you have none,—your glory has departed; but don’t you think that all of us here will fight you,—no. We are all of us present here—five brothers; with whom would you fight,—with a chance of success? You may expect to be a match for Nakula or Sahadeva,—you are at least equal to that.” Tears stood in Duryodhana’s eyes at this raillery of the Prince; he wiped away his tears, and said, “O Bhíma! What do you say? Don’t spack thus. Yudhisthira, Nakula and Sahadeva are women; I disdain to fight with them. You slew our Duhstásana, Arjuna slew my friend Karna; both of you are my mortal enemies; but I challenge you by preference; you know something of mace-fighting.”

Yud. (*Laughing.*) Duryodhana may say anything. What then?

Pan. Then he began to fight with Bhíma. Krishna told me,—“Panchálaka, go and tell the king that we have found out Duryodhana and that Bhíma is engaged in fighting with him. Of a certainty, the Prince will beat him soon. Tell him to get everything ready for the installation; His Majesty

will be installed this day at an auspicious moment ; tell him to put gems in vessels of sacred water. Further, my dear friend Draupadí has not bound her hair for many a day ; let the king also arrange for that ceremony. What fear when Bhíma and Parasuráma engage in fight ?”

Drau. (*Overjoyed.*) What my friend Krishna has said must indubitably come to pass ;—no doubt of that.

Pan. What I have said is not his wish only—it is his desire. Pray arrange for the ceremonies.

Yud. His desire is law to us. Who’s there, ho ! Do you prepare for the ceremonies, as enjoined by Krishna.

Ch. We have already got everything ready.

Yud. Go then, tell the cashier to give Panchálaka a proper reward.

Ch. I will, Sire.

[*Exit with Panchálaka.*]

(*Inside.*)

Who’s there, ho ! Give me some water ; I am dying of thirst. Water ! Water !

(*Enter CHARVAKA, a Rákshasa, in the guise of an anchoret.*)

Char. I am your guest, Sir ; I am very thirsty.

Yud. (*Rising, respectfully.*) Welcome, welcome, Sir. Pray sit down.

Char. (*Sitting down.*) Do you also sit down.

Yud. Yes, Sir ; pray accept my respects. (*Bows low.*)

Char. (*Aside.*) I am a friend to Duryodhana ; let me see if I can anyhow injure the Pándavas. (*Loud.*) No ceremony is needed ; let me have a little water first.

Yud. Who's there ? I say. Bring a glass of water sharp. Pray, Sir, where did you go, that you are so much fatigued ?

Char. I am an ascetic. Wishing to see the fight, I went to the field. I stood for a long time under this burning autumnal sun, and am therefore very thirsty.

(*Enter MAID, with a dish of sweetmeats and a glass of water.*)

Yud. Pray, Sir, fall to.

Char. Yes, I will. Are you a Kshetriya ?

Yud. Yes, Sir.

Char. Then how can I eat and drink at your place ?* Sure, you have lost some relatives in the war. Let me rather repose a while in this shade.

Drau. (*To Maid.*) Do you, girl, fan our reverend guest for a while. (*Maid begins to fan.*)

Char. Heaven defend us ! What a terrible fight ! What a terrible fight has Arjuna fought with Duryodhana !

Ch. You mean Bhíma.

* A Hindu is considered unclean for some days after the death of a relative.

Char. Pish ! Who is this dotard ? You should not speak of what you have not seen or heard ; I saw it was Arjuna.

Yud. Pray, Sire, bear with me ; we have heard that Duryodhana is engaged with Bhíma.

Char. (*Laughing.*) Bhíma had fallen long before ; then came up Arjuna.

Yud. What ! Has our brother fallen ?

Drau. My lord, where have you gone !

Ch. What do you say ?

Char. (*To Chamberlain.*) Who are these, Sir ?

Ch. This is King Yudhishthira,—that is Draupadí.

Char. Then I have done wrong in telling them of it.

Yud. (*Aside.*) What have I heard ! Duryodhana has killed my brother ! Is this possible ? But how can I disbelieve the holy man ? (*To Draupadí.*) My love, pacify yourself. Let me know it fully. (*To Charvaka.*) What do you say, Sire ? Bhíma has fallen ?

Char. No more of that.

Yud. Let me hear it ;—quit this life I must,—but what's the harm in hearing it out ?

Char. (*Aside.*) That's what I want. Let me convince him of Bhíma's death. (*Aloud.*) Your Majesty, I am loath to speak of unwelcome things ; but as you insist upon knowing the circumstances, here they are. First a close fight took place between Bhíma and Duryodhana. Duryodhana was about to be worsted, when in came Baladeva, and seeing the plight of his

beloved disciple, himself fought with Bhíma, slew him and went away.

Yud. (*Weeping.*) Then brother has actually departed this life. Alas ! Alas ! Brother, where have you gone ?

Drau. (*Weeping.*) Lord, where have you gone ? You have laid down your life to avenge my wrong. Woe's me ! (*Falls to the ground.*)

Ch. What evil news is this ! (*To Yudhisthira.*) Be calm, Sire. (*To Charvaka.*) Sir, pray soothe His Majesty.

Char. (*Aside.*) Yes, I must ; but let me first advise him to die. (*Aloud.*) Your Majesty, be calm. If you are determined to resign your life, pray hear the rest.

Yud. Very well, Sir.

Char. When Bhíma lay low in the field, Arjuna became disconsolate, and took up his brother's mace, despite the repeated entreaties of Krishna. The latter advised peace, and deprecated war. But Duryodhana laughed at him to scorn, and began the fight. They fought long and lustily. At length Arjuna became insensible by the blows of his enemy. Seeing this, Krishna took him up in his car, and drove towards Dwaraka ; and I—

Yud. (*Weeping.*) What more shall you say, Sire ? You have said enough. What has befallen us ! Brother, you protected us in the house of lac, you slew Jarásandha and such *asuras* as Hirimbá and

Kichaka, my word was always law to you. Alas ! Woe to me. Alas ! What have I done ; have I not sacrificed my all at the fatal play at dice ? Brother, you took a world of pains for me—you dragged the life of a slave with the king of Viráta. Have you for this reason left me ?

Drau. Lord ! Did you not vow to bind up my hair, but how have you broken your promise, a Kshetriya as you are ?

Yud. Mother, do you see the conduct of your son ? He has left me ; and I am weeping here bitterly. (*To Charvaka.*) Reverend sage, has the holy Balaráma done this, on coming ?

Char. Yes, Your Majesty ; who else could kill Bhíma ?

Yud. Alas ! (*Looking upwards.*) O Baladeva, I am your relative ; your brother Krishna is the bosom friend of Arjuna. 'Tis true Duryodhana is your disciple, but so also Bhíma. Why then did you set your face against me ? But you are not to blame ; it is the fault of my luck.

Drau. Lord, did you not promise to bind my hair with Duryodhana's gore ? Do so. (*To Maid.*) Girl, did he not purpose to do so ? But where is he ? And Krishna a moment before sent word to arrange for the ceremony of binding my hair ? Will his word also go for nothing ? Never. Girl, do you prepare for the ceremony ;—I must have my hair bound ; don't delay. Bless me ! What am I speaking ? Grief has drowned my senses ; I am wasting

time. (*To Yudhishthira.*) Your Majesty, prepare my funeral pyre soon ; and go to the enemy, and die there ; do not maintain your life any longer ; you cannot stand it.

Yud. Yes, love, you have spoken true. (*To Chamberlain.*) Friend, prepare a funeral pyre soon ; let her end her sorrows there ; and then give my bow and arrow ;—no, no use of them ;—Arjuna took up the mace of Bhíma, and so will I.

Char. Your Majesty, you don't wish to conquer your enemy ; what, then, is the use of going there ? You may anywhere resign your life.

Ch. (*Wrathfully.*) What ! This looks not like the speech of a holy man !

Char. (*In fear.*) Has he recognised me ? (*Aloud.*) No, Sir, I don't wish His Majesty ill. I say if he come by disgrace by going there—

Yud. You have spoken truly. What's the use of going there ?

Ch. Is Your Majesty prepared to renounce your Kshetriya duty, like a common man ?

Yud. No, Chamberlain, our Bhíma has lain in the field, and shall I go to witness that ? Beloved wife, you are the daughter of the king of Páñchála ; you have come by this misery for having fallen to my hands ; let both of us ascend the funeral pyre.

Char. Yes, maiden, you are the wife of the Pándavas of the great Bharata race ; it behoves you to ascend the pyre with your husband.

Yud. What's this? No body has yet brought in the faggots.

Drau. Bring them yourself, Sire;—who else will? Lords, now that you have gone, nobody obeys us.

Yud. Holy sage, if you kindly take the trouble to bring some faggots.

Char. That's not my work. I should not stay here any longer; I go. (*Rises, and aside.*) So I have attained my object. Let me now make the pyre invisibly and then give the slip.

[*Exit.*]

Drau. Your Majesty, prepare the pyre outright. There's an uproar; we don't know what might befall us next.

Yud. Yes, I will do it presently. Wouldn't you say anything to our mother before you leave this world?

Drau. No, what shall I say?

Yud. (*To Maid.*) Gentle maiden, go to my mother and tell her,—her Bhíma has laid down his life for my fault, and that I ascend the pyre for burning shame, which prevents me from communicating the news to her personally. (*To Chamberlain.*) Friend, tell Sahadeva, he is indeed my younger brother, but he is not my inferior in sense or attainments. He regards me, and he surely will comply with my request when I say, that he should not resign his life like me; he should not deprive the manes

of his father of his oblations. Tell this also to Nakula. I have brought him up, and certainly he will listen to me. He should not also quit his life ; in time he will forget me. Wherever he lives in future,—whether under the roof of his relatives, at the house of the Yádavas, or in a forest,—let him take care of himself. Go friend, don't linger any longer.

Ch. (*Weeping.*) O you departed majesty of Hastiná—O Prince Pándu, where are you ? What a pass have your five sons at length been reduced to ! (*About to go.*)

Yud. Friend, another word before I leave you. Should Arjuna recover, let him rest content with destroying his enemies only ; let him never meddle with Balaráma. Urge this upon him particularly.

Ch. Very well, Your Majesty.

[*Exit.*]

Yud. (*Seeing the blaze at a distance, joyfully.*) Mark ! How the god is flaming.*

Drau. Your Majesty, let me first fall into it.

Yud. No, no,—we together will go in.

Maid. (*Crying.*) Lord of Fire, this is king Yudhisthira ; he fed thee with no end of oblations at the Rájsuya Yajña : his brother Arjuna also ministered unto thee by burning the Khándava forest. He is now about to fall into thee, with his spouse, Draupadí. Do thou protect him, lord,

* Agni is a god in the Vedic theology.

protect His Majesty. Don't do it, Your Majesty, don't do it.

Yud. My dear girl, do not prevent me. As promise is, I must not live any longer..

Drau. What's the delay then, Your Majesty? Your brother is far up by this time.

Yud. Yes, I go. My love, why are my right eyelids shaking? Methinks our Bhíma still lives. Why so, dear?

(*Loud sounds inside.*)

Ch. (*In a hurry.*) Death and ruin! Your Majesty. The villain Duryodhana all painted in gore is searching for Her Majesty.

Yud. (*Despairingly.*) O God! What hast thou ordained! Brother Arjuna, where are you now, when I am in this imminent danger?

Ch. What's this? The villain is coming this way. What's to be done? Her Majesty will be dishonored!

Drau. Alas! What has befallen my lot!

Ch. (*To Maid.*) Good girl, do you speedily take Her Majesty to the funeral pyre; and call in Dhrishtadyumna, Nakula and Sahadeva;—out with you. Good Heavens! What has come to pass! No Bhíma, no Arjuna now; His Majesty is distracted from grief; who is to protect the queen?

(*Inside.*)

What ho! Why are you so distracted? That Draupadí—at whom Duryodhana glanced lustfully

and whom he tried to take in his lap, in the midst of the assembly, whose knotted braid was rudely grasped and loosened by Duhs'ásana—don't you know that Draupadí?

Ch. Your Majesty, what has befallen your lot! Who will protect you now?

Yud. (*Rising.*) No fear, no fear. Who's there? Bring my bow. Villain, I will splinter your mace in pieces by my arrows; come on. Shame of Kurus, I will not, like you, drag my existence after the death of my brother; I will enter the pyre after slaying you. (*Prepares to fight.*)

(*Enter BHÍMA, bathed in blood.*)

Bhi. Ho soldiers, why do you fear? I am no ghost—I am no *Rákshasa*; I am a Kshetriya; I have slain my enemy and have painted myself with his blood. I will fulfil my vow;—where is Draupadí?

Ch. (*In a hurry.*) Your Majesty, go, fall speedily into the funeral pyre.

Drau. (*Rising.*) Me miserable! You have not yet thrown me into the fire. The villain is about to lay his hands on me.

Yud. What's this? No one has brought me my bow! Hang it,—I have my two arms; I will throw him into the fire by main force. (*Prepares to do so.*)

Ch. Your Majesty, your hairs are falling over your face and obstructing your sight. Now that your

hopes have been dashed, bind them up and plunge yourself into the fire.

Yud. No, no, that can't be. Duryodhana is yet alive. You are the daughter of a Kshetriya ; do not bind your hair.

Bhi. (*With a smile.*) Love, why will you tie your hair by your own hands, I being alive ?

(*DRAUPADÍ attempts to fly.*)

Stop, stop ; no fear, no fear. (*Attempts to catch hold of her hair.*)

Yud. (*Holds Bhíma fast.*) You villain, Duryodhana, where will you go ?

Bhi. (*Amazed.*) What's this ! His Majesty has caught me, mistaking me for Duryodhana ? Desist, Your Majesty, I am not Duryodhana.

Ch. (*Recognising Bhíma.*) What have we here ! This is Prince Bhímsena ! 'Tis not Duryodhana, as I live.

Maid. (*Seeing, joyfully.*) No fear, no fear, Your Majesty. This is no enemy ; it is Prince Bhímsena. He has come to fulfil his vow of binding your locks.

Drau. Why, girl, do you deceive me now ?

Yud. (*To Chamberlain.*) My friend, is this really our Bhíma ?—is he not my enemy Duryodhana ?

Ch. No, Your Majesty ; it is not Duryodhana. The Prince Bhímsena has come after killing Duryodhana, and having painted himself with his blood. It is for this reason that we could not recognise him at first.

Bhi. Does the miscreant live, Your Majesty? I have slain him and have painted my body with his blood, as if it were the red sandal paste.

Yud. My brother, my eyes are shedding drops of joy, which prevent me from seeing. Are you indeed our Bhíma? Are you alive? Is Arjuna also alive?

Bhi. Yes, Your Majesty, all of us are safe and sound. We have abolished quite our enemies; no more care.

Yud. Brother, let go the conquering of enemies;—tell me true, are you our own Bhíma? Was it you that slew the Rákshasa, Vaka?

Bhi. May it please Your Majesty, yes.

Yud. Was it you that rent the chest of Jarásandha.

Bhi. Yes, Sire, 'twas I; but so please you. Quit hold of me once.

Yud. Why so, brother? Does anything remain to be done?

Bhi. Only the main business; I shall have to bind the flowing locks of Draupadí before Duryodhana's blood is dried up on my body.

Yud. Go then, my dear; let the *veni* of poor Draupadí meet with *sañhára*.*

Bhi. (*Coming to Draupadí.*) My love, through your good fortune, I have exterminated the last of the hostile race.

* This is rather a queer expression; but the original is queer, and so the translation. *Veni* means here female hair in an unbound state; *sañhára* means death. *Veni sañhára* means the *extinction* of the *flowing* state of the hair, that is, its conversion into the bound.

Drau. (*Rising, in fear.*) Lord, welcome ! Wel-
come !

Bhi. (*Laughing.*) Do you fear at seeing me, love ? Don't you recognise me ? No fear. Duhs'ásana dragged you by the hair, I have drunk his life-blood ; Duryodhana tried to take you on his thigh, I have smashed it and have painted myself in his blood. (*To Maid.*) Where's Bhánumati now ? Didn't she taunt you ? (*To Draupadí.*) Love, do remember ? I promised to remove your grief by breaking Duryodhana's thigh.

Drau. Love, love, you have done as you said.

Bhi. Then, bind up your hair now.

Drau. (*Smiling.*) I have not bound it so long that I have forgotten the process ; do you help me. (*Bhíma touches Draupadí's hair, when Maid ties it.*)

Yud. (*In a transport.*) Praise be to God ! Here comes Krishna with Arjuna.

(*Enter KRISHNA and ARJUNA.*)

Kri. Victory to Your Majesty !

Yud. Welcome, welcome, brother. The cause you befriend is sure to win. You are the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer ; you are the Deity ; in you is peace ; we are seeing you daily and nightly ; why then will our trouble remain ?

Arj. I make my obeisance, Your Majesty. (*Bows low.*)

Yud. Dear brother. (*Embraces Arjuna.*)

Kri. Your Majesty, Vyása, Válmiki, Parasuráma, Jáváli and other sages are coming to install Your Majesty; Nakula, Sahadeva and other generals are bringing in the necessary things. I hear that the Rákshasa Charvaka deceived Your Majesty, by assuming the shape of an anchoret. I have, therefore, come hastily with Arjuna.

Yud. (*Surprised.*) What! Was it the friend of Duryodhana, Charvaka. Where is the miscreant now?

Kri. Nakula has caught him in the way.

Yud. Is it? Very well. As misfortune never comes single, so good things come by showers.

(*Enter the holy men; they install Yudhishthira. Song and dance; music in heaven, and flowers showered down.*)

Kri. Your Majesty, pray tell me what yet remains to be done.

Yud. Brther, you leave nothing to be desired on the part of him whom you smile upon. What more remains, dear? Our enemies have been utterly annihilated,—no evil has befallen us, five brothers. The grief that Draupadí had come to, through my folly, has been removed; what more shall I pray for? This is now my prayer: may givers live long, may all revere you, may the good appreciate the learned, and finally may kings find happiness in the good of their subjects.

Kri. The paths of righteousness are—success.

THE END.

BHĀTĀ NĀRĀYAṆ



